Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Fast Facts

What is the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC)? A federal competitive grant that will support school readiness and success. States that win RTT-ELC grants will get a boost in implementing ambitious plans for high-quality early learning programs and services.

The Department of Early Learning (DEL) is leading our state's application, which could bring Washington up to $60 million over the next four years. The application is due by Oct. 19, with awards announced in December. The grant is a partnership between the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Social Services.

Is Washington ready to compete? We are ready to race! Washington is well-positioned to submit a competitive proposal. We have a 10-year state Early Learning Plan created with input of hundreds of Washington residents who told us what was needed to help make sure all children have what they need to succeed in school and life (www.del.wa.gov/plan).

What will Washington's application include? The federal application guidance is very specific—*this is not about funding new programs or initiatives*. Rather, RTT-ELC is meant to support states in coordinating and aligning resources and policies so that families around the state and nation have access to high-quality early learning programs.

RTT-ELC requirements →

- ✓ **Successful state systems** that include: demonstrated commitment to early learning and development; rationale for reform; aligned and coordinated system; and sustainable budget.
- ✓ **High-quality, accountable programs** with a statewide, validated QRIS and access to high-quality programs for children with high needs.
- ✓ **Promoting early learning and development outcomes for children** through early learning and development standards, comprehensive assessment system, screening and addressing health, behavioral and developmental needs and family engagement.
- ✓ **A great early childhood education workforce** that includes a clear ladder of knowledge and competencies and support for providers to move up that ladder.
- ✓ **Measuring outcomes and progress** including kindergarten entry assessment and/or building an early learning data system.

Washington's priorities →

- ✓ **QRIS** system that includes all licensed child care, Head Start, and ECEAP by 2015*; clear **professional development standards**
- ✓ Use of **WaKIDS** to inform instruction in early learning and early elementary; reach all schools by 2014-15 school year*
- ✓ Strengthen our **P-20 data system** to inform decision making at all levels
- ✓ Use the **Early Learning Guidelines** (currently being updated) as the backbone of all of our early learning work with children
- ✓ Support **early learning professionals** with a robust registry that tracks and incentivizes increased training and education
  * Required elements of application